

Remarks

Reconsideration of this application in view of the amendments made to the drawings and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

In amended Fig. 21, erroneously shown element 78 has been removed. Applicants submit that this modification does not introduce new matter and is supported by the Specification in paragraphs [0136]-[0139] in the published application US 2002/0091449 A1. As is clear by the text, a valveless plate/socket attachment was intended to be shown and described. As evident in the discussion of Fig. 21 at paragraph [0139], element 78, a vacuum valve earlier shown and described with respect to prior inventions, was not discussed, as pointed out by the Examiner. This is so because it was not part of the invention intended to be claimed. Figs. 22 and 23 also do not show the element. In accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.84(p)(5), reference characters not mentioned in the description shall not appear in the drawings. Therefore, removal of this element from the figure is proper.

Claims 1-15 remain in this application.

In the Advisory Action of September 15, 2003, it was asserted that the prior filed Request for Reconsideration did not place the application in condition for allowance because valve 78 shown in Fig. 21 “appears to be an integral part of (or at least directly attached to) the plate/socket attachment (200).” Thus, it was not seen how such an embodiment was any more “valveless” than that of Slemker et al.

Fig. 21 has been amended to remove the erroneously shown valve 78. The corrected drawing now accurately shows the described embodiment, which is in accord with the subsequent embodiments of the claimed invention shown and described in the specification. Thus, the valveless plate/socket attachment as claimed is patentable over Slemker et al., alone or in theoretical combination with either Fishman et al. (US 5,007,937) or Caspers (US 5,735,906). Therefore, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of all rejections and allowance of the current claims.

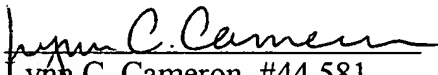
CONCLUSION

All of the claims remaining in this application are in condition for allowance. The prompt issuance of a notice to that effect is respectfully solicited. If there are any remaining questions, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Dated: December 5, 2003

M2:20587316.01